Increase in non-plan expenditure of Government offices

2653. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a steep increase in the non-plan expenditure in the Central Government offices during the last three years in spite of their downsizing;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have taken any measures to cut down non-plan expenditure, particularly under the heads publicity, advertisement, Hospitality, Tours (including foreign tour), STD and ISD telephone bills, electricity bills etc.

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) The Non-plan expenditure has increased from Rs. 221871.00 crore in 1999-2000 to Rs. 289924.00 crore in 2002-2003 (RE). This increase of 30.70% in non-plan expenditure is mainly due to the increase in the interest payments, subsidies and defence because expenditure on pay and allowances as a percentage of non plan expenditure has come down from 14.20% in 1999-2000 to 10.91% in 2002-2003. This reflects efficacy of measures to rein in non-developmental expenditure.

(c) to (e) It is Government's constant endeavour to contain non-plan, non-developmental expenditure. It is in this context that, along with other measures, instructions to avoid wasteful expenditure are issued from time to time to all the Ministries/Departments. These measures, *inter-alia*, include ban on the creation of posts, reduction in the number of sanctioned posts, restrictions on the filling up of vacant posts, reduction in office expenses, restrictions on purchase of vehicles, restriction on foreign travel and on entertainment/hospitality expenses, restriction on STD/ISD facility, restriction on number of free calls on official residential telephones, electricity etc.